

L 490 - Assignment of Terms: Entity Attributes for Persons

BACKGROUND: Demographic terms that describe group(s) with which a person self-identifies are assigned in authority records for the person as entity attributes. This instruction sheet provides the general principles by which demographic terms are assigned in name authority records for persons. Some of the instructions were drawn from the Report of the PCC Ad Hoc Task Group on Gender in Name Authority Records.

For examples of MARC 21 name authority records to which demographic group terms have been assigned see L 560 - MARC Coding for Entity Attributes in Personal Name Authority Records. For guidance on the ethical application of LCDGT see L 400 - Ethics and Demographic Group Terms.

1. General rule. Assign one or more demographic terms with which a person self-identifies and explicitly discloses. Self-identification is essential. Do not make assumptions about groups that may be associated with a person based on photographs or the use of gendered titles or pronouns. Typical sources for self-identification include:

- Biographical information published in the resource
- Biographical information provided by the publisher
- Author's personal website or social media profiles
- Direct communication with the author
- For non-contemporary persons use works by the person as well as biographies, obituaries, articles, etc. about the person

2. Gender terms. When assigning gender terms, follow these best practice guidelines:

- Record Males or Females in accordance with the term used by the person, or with gendered pronouns and/or inflected nouns used in the source
- Do not assume gender identity based on pictures or names
- Do not dig for given names or genders assigned at birth
- For transgender/transsexual persons record the terms Transgender people or Transsexuals in accordance with the term used by the person
- For well-known persons who publicly transition between male and female mid-life and have literary warrant for recording both genders, record both Males and Females and other terms as applicable
- Record gender terms based on information in the source. For example, if a person claims to be a cisgender male, record Cisgender persons and Males. If a person just says "as a young boy..." or uses male pronouns then record Males, but do not assume he is cisgender or transgender
- Record dates associated with a gender only when the person explicitly provides dates of transition

- Take into account the following considerations before assigning a term:
 - The potential for this information to harm the [person] through outing or violating the right to privacy.
 - An indication that the [person] consents to having this information shared publicly.
 - The information will help a library user in the search process.

3. Number of terms. Use judgment to assign one or more demographic terms that will be useful for discovery purposes.

4. Specificity. Assign terms that correspond to the specific demographic groups with which the person self-identifies. Specificity is not a property of a given term. For example, a seemingly broad term like **Lawyers** is specific when a person self-identifies as a lawyer.

5. Multi-element demographic groups. If a person self-identifies as belonging to a group that includes several discrete elements, assign a separate term for each element that will be useful for discovery purposes.

Example:

A person who self-identifies as a lesbian teenager. Assign the terms **Lesbians** and **Teenagers**.

6. Examples.

	<p><i>Data:</i> "Rachel Renée Russell is an attorney. ... Rachel lives in Chantilly, Virginia"—Author blurb.</p> <p><i>Terms:</i> Virginians Lawyers</p>
	<p><i>Data:</i> "Matthew David Sadler is an English chess grandmaster, chess writer and two-time British Chess Champion"—Page 4 of cover.</p> <p><i>Terms:</i> Chess players Britons</p>
<p><i>[Dates will be associated with the terms Males (2009-) and Females (1992-2009) in the name authority record.]</i></p>	<p><i>Data:</i> "Jon Edwards was born in Peru in 1992. In 2009 ... Jon started his transition from female to male ... awareness of what being young and transgender is like"—Page i.</p> <p><i>Terms:</i> Transgender people Males Females</p>

	<p><i>Data:</i> "I am a two-spirit Ojibwa-Cree Elder who was raised in a remote Ojibwa community near Lake Nipigon"—Page i.</p> <p><i>Terms:</i> Two-spirit people Cree (North American people) Ojibwe (North American people)</p>